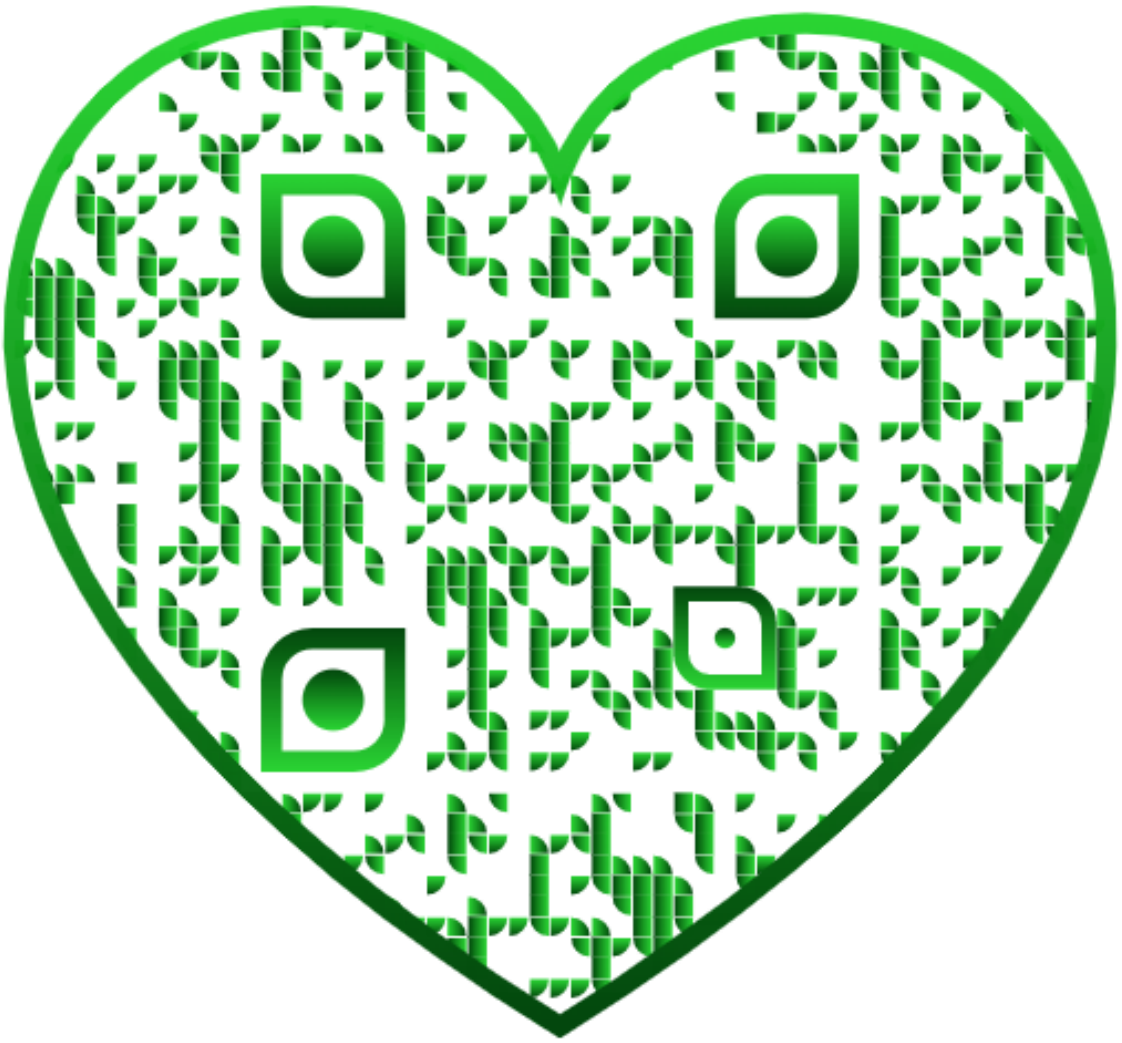
OLD GRANDMA'S MEDICINAL HERBS

59 Herbal Remedies With A Touched With Grandma's Magic



Old Grandma’s Medicinal Herbs

59 Herbal Remedies With A Touch of Grandma’s Magic

Old Grandma Healy

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Introduction:

Since ancient civilization days, herbs and spices have been used by the human kind for medicinal, culinary and spiritual purposes. Due to lack of knowledge on medicinal herbs, people all over the world have adapted to Western medicine that treats the symptoms with unacceptable side effects. Unlike allopathic medications, herbs holistically treat the root cause of the medical problem, not just masking the symptoms. Even today, most of the indigenous and Native tribal people are using herbs to successfully treat many ailments. Modern research communities have recently begun studies to understand the benefits of medicinal herbs against so-called ‘untreatable’ diseases and disorders.

Most of us are using various herbs and spices in our kitchen to spice-up the food and to add flavor in our recipe. Almost all the herbs and spices have health benefits and improve flavor. But make sure you’re purchase the herb or spices from the grocery store before the expiry date. In some cases, the herbs/spices might be sitting on the grocery shelf over years that result in loss of nutritive, medicinal properties or possible contamination. In such cases, you can choose from organic sources that works you!

Along with medicinal benefits, herbs possess high levels of trace minerals, antioxidants, vitamins and essential salts. Instead of taking nutritional supplement capsules/tablets, you can take herbs in the prescribed way to get more nutrition. You can grow certain herbs in your garden or backyard easily. Growing herbs at your garden is a fun-filled hobby and even saves your wallet too! You can prepare your favorite dishes with garnished herbs filled with nutrients and antioxidants.

The growth and distribution of medicinal herbs depends on environmental, geographic and climatic factors. You cannot see Native European herbs in tropical countries such as India and Africa. But we should have knowledge about the medicinal and culinary herbs that are widely distributed all over the world. You can impart the knowledge of medicinal herbs in the forthcoming chapters of this book.

Native Herbs of Europe:

CALAMUS ROOT:

Calamus root or rhizome is not uncommon for native Europeans. The leaves are of 1 cm with spiked flowers. The leaves are fragrant with curly edge or undulate. The roots are aromatic and spicy in nature. The plant grows well in wetlands of Europe, northern USA, India, Pacific Asia and Southern Canada. You can identify the oil by its fragrance, bitter taster and characteristic aroma. Traditionally, European use Calamus as a digestive aid and to treat tooth ache.

In early days, calamus root was used to abort unwanted pregnancies. You can use calamus root to treat colds, nasal congestion, periods problems, joint pains, sleeping disorders, sexual arousal disorders, urine retention and nerve weakness. In ancient days, the herb was used properly and safely to treat lung infections, nasal congestion and to induce sleep. Ayurvedic physicians believe calamus root can promote blood circulation into the brain, promotes memory and improves awareness. However, misuse of calamus root in the modern days have created havoc and safety concerns.

You can prevent or delay progression of cancer, uterus problems, stress and bacterial infections by taking Calamus root. The herb contains azulene, galangin, menthol, tannin, cineole, alpha-pinene, terpenes, zinc, magnesium, choline and eugenol.

Preparation methods:

Although, most of the Europeans use Calamus root as herbal tea, it is not recommended for internal use. Calamus root can be used as a bath additive or as an alcohol rub to improve blood circulation or muscle pain.

Calamus side effects:

In high doses, Calamus oil might cause hallucination. Do not use Calamus root for internal purposes without medical supervision. Use whole herb for external applications.

PARSLEY:

We’re using parsley in kitchen and for medicinal purposes daily. Parsley is beneficial to treat digestive disorders, gout, bad breath and urine retention problems. Parsley effectively prevents rheumatic disorders, cancers, allergies, nasal congestion, bacterial infections and blood circulatory disorders. You can also use parsley as a longevity tonic. For culinary and medicinal use, roots, seeds and leaves of parsley can be used.

Parsley contains vitamin A, B, C and iron, starch, volatile oil, starch, mucilage and apiin.

Parsley is cultivated across the world and characterized by curled and broad leaves. Parsley is a versatile medicinal plant that prevents gas, bloating and digestion. If you’re suffering from fluid retention, take parsley to increase urination. In the same way, you can treat gout and rheumatism. Parsley inhibits allergy causing chemicals (histamines) and prevents allergy, sinus infection and congestion. Parsley increase blood circulation in the womb (uterus) and bring on delayed menses.

How to grow Parsley?

Parsley is widely cultivated all over the Europe since ancient days. The biennial plant can be grown as annual in harsh winters. After sowing, germination is generally slow. But you hasten germination by soaking the seeds for 24 hours before sowing it in the soil. Try to plant where it can get plenty of sunlight and water.

Preparation Methods:

You can use parsley either as fresh leaves or as root herbal tea. Using fresh parsley is the best way if you’re using it for medicinal purpose. Add apples or carrots with basil and some bunch of parsley and juice it. To treat bad breath after dinner, chew fresh sprig of parsley. Parsley paste can be applied over the bruises.

Parsley root tea:

You can prepare strong decoction of parsley plant root. The decoction is considered as liver and kidney tonic that fights urinary tract infections. Take one

teaspoon of dried/chopped parsley root with a cup of water. Boil the mixture in low heat for 10 minutes. You can add anise or cinnamon to improve taste.

Parsley leaf tea:

Take a bunch of fresh parsley leaves and one teaspoon crushed anise seeds. You can optionally add dandelion leaf, chamomile with honey or lemon. Infuse the mixture in half cup of boiling water for at least 10 minutes. Filter the mixture and drink it.

Parsley side effects:

The whole herb used in food rarely causes any problems. Concentrated extracts should be avoided by kidney inflammation patients. Parsley can induce blood circulation in the uterus and bring on delayed menstruation. Do not use parsley, if you’re pregnant or suspecting a pregnancy.

EYEBRIGHT:

About 20 varieties of Eyebright are distributed in Europe. The little plant grows up to 2-8 inches high in June to September. The plant can be characterized by deeply cut, small, numerous leaves with purplish or whitish flowers. The plant relies on other plants for nourishment and it is classified as semi-parasitic. To treat sinus infections, allergies and nasal congestion, aerial parts of Eyebright are often used. Eyebright contains several volatile oil, glycosides, saponins and tannins. These chemicals are antibacterial and anti-inflammatory in nature.

How to Grow Eyebright

You can grow Eyebright in your backyard if you've suitable garden space. Eyebright thrives well in fallow fields with ample moisture and sunlight.

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare Eyebright infusions as tea, eyewash or cold compress. You can add nettle with Eyebright to treat allergies. To maintain eye health, include hesperidin, bilberry and rutin with Eyebright infusion.

Eyebright eyewash:

Infuse 1 oz of the herb with a pint of boiling, sterile water. After ten minutes strain the infusion and take eye(s) bath at least three to four times a day. Use warm infusion, if the pain is intense. In mild to moderate pain, cold application is sufficient.

Herbal eyewash:

Prepare a decoction by using roots and bark. Alternatively, you can prepare infusion using leaves and flowers. Add Eyebright with cornflowers, chickweed, calendula, Oregon grape, barberry and goldenseal and boil it for at least 20 minutes. Allow it to cool and pour the decoction in a sterile eye cup. Place the eye cup over your eyes and make your eyes wet. Blink several times to allow the decoction inside your eyes. Make sure you filtered the infusion thoroughly without herb particles. Unfiltered herb can irritate the eyes.

You can dilute the tincture with sterile saline solution (4 drops: 1 ounce saline) or 8 drops of eyebright root decoction in one oz of saline solution.

To treat bacterial and ear mite infections in your pets, oil infusion of fresh or dried roots might be beneficial. Apply 1-10 drops, until needed.

Herbal compress for eyestrain:

Prepare a strong tea or infusion and use it to dampen a soft cloth. Place the cloth over your eyelids and relax for at least 10 minutes. You can place a couple of cool cucumber slices over your eyes.

Eyebright Side Effects:

You need not worry about side effects of Eyebright, if you use sterile water to prepare Eyebright eyewash or infusion.

BAY LAUREL:

Bay Laurel is a main choice of herb in aromatherapy due to its fragrance. To flavor soups and stews in Mediterranean dishes, bay laurel is being used in European countries. Bay laurel is a best herb for treatment migraine, pain, bruises, sprains and nerve weakness. Traditionally, oil, fruit and leaves of bay laurel is used for medicinal purposes. The herb contains cineol, pinene, geraniol, parthenolides and eugenol.

Bay laurel oil treats ear pain, arthritis, sore muscles, sprains and lower back aches.

How to Grow Bay Laurel

You may find it hard to grow bay laurel from seeds or from cuttings. Instead, you can buy a young plant to grow it outdoors in moderate climates. But you need it to be sheltered indoors during winter seasons. The plant needs plenty of water and sunshine. It may grow up to 60 feet in wild conditions. But in contained environment, it may not exceed 6 feet tall.

Preparation Methods:

Dried Bay laurel leaves are best to flavor stews and meats. You can prepare it as herbal bath or tea. We cannot prepare essential oil as it needs specialized distillation procedures.

Bay laurel oil infusion:

Take bay laurel leaves and fresh bay berries. Add rosemary, black pepper and allspice to the mix.

Boil the herb in water until you can see the oil floats on the top. The oil contains volatile and fixed oils. Pack dry bay leaves with olive oil and infuse the mixture on a low for at least TWO weeks. Strain the clean oil and allow it to cool in room temperature. Distilled bay oil has characteristic sharp and spicy odor.

Culinary use:

For kitchen use, fresh bay laurel leaves can be picked up to flavor soups and stews.

Bay Laurel side effects:

Avoid Bay laurel oils, if you’re expecting a baby. It may induce spotting and abortion. Do not take essential oils internally. Make sure to dilute the oil before use.

ARNICA:

It could be difficult for you to differentiate Arnica from classic sunflower. Arnica is characterized by bright yellow daisy-like flowers. In some parts of Russian and Swiss Alps, the alpine herb is being used in folk medicine to treat swelling, blood clot, nerve weakness, sprains, bone dislocations, fracture symptoms and joint pain. You can use roots and flowers of arnica. The herb is rich in arnicin, thymol, flavonoids, resins and carotenoids.

You can hasten healing process by cleansing waste fluids in the affected area. The pain relieving property of arnica is due to presence of sesquiterpene lactones. Arnica suppresses pain symptoms by blocking the pain-causing chemicals. To treat your problems, arnica should be in first aid kit. But arnica use is limited to short durations due to risk of developing skin allergy.

Preparation Methods:

Arnica oil or extract must be thoroughly diluted before internal use. You should shell out more pennies, if you purchase arnica oil from commercial vendors. Still you can prepare arnica oil by your own.

Arnica Oil:

Take handful of dried and coarsely ground arnica blossoms and add a teaspoon of citric acid or rosemary antioxidant to improve shelf life. Fill a mason jar with olive oil and arnica flowers. Don’t worry about exact proportions but use enough oil to soak the herbs. Infuse the mixture in steady (slow) heat for 2-3 weeks. Strain the oil for use.

Arnica tincture:

To relieve tender foot symptoms, take a foot bath using two ounce of arnica tincture.

Prepare arnica tincture using fresh arnica flowers (1:5) or tincture of dried flowers 1:10. For cold compress, always dilute tincture in water (1:4).

Arnica side effects:

Prolonged use of arnica can cause skin irritation. Do not use arnica oil or tincture on open or bleeding wounds.

CHAMOMILE:

Chamomile is wild, annual, edible plant that can be easily identified by the small, daisy-like, white flowers with cone-shaped yellow center. The fern-like green leaves and finely divided and looks like parsley. You can see chamomile flowers blooming between May and October. Depending on the condition, the plant may grow between 60 cm to one metre tall. The plant thrives well in sunny locations but not in hot, dry regions. You can consume chamomile leaves and flowers by tossing it into salads or as herbal tea.

Chamomile is powerful nerve tonic, sleep-inducer and pain reliever. Certain compounds of chamomile are proved to anti-cancer, digestive, urine-productive and blood vessel constrictors. Chamomile is preferred over other herbs due to gentle effectiveness against various ailments.

Chamomile contains volatile oils such as bisabolol, chamazulene, farnesene with coumarins, cyanogenic glycosides, fatty acids and valerianic acid. These active biomolecules are present in chamomile oils, chamomile flowers and tea. These herbal constituents effectively treat delayed and/or irregular menstruation, bowel problems, stress, mental tension and anxiety. Chamomile treats infections in women's reproductive organ.

Chamomile calms brain nerves that involve in stress, anxiety and attention disorders. Chamomile alleviates liver problems and digestive disorders including nausea and morning sickness. You can flaunt beautiful skin and hair if you use chamomile flower extract regularly as body and hair wash.

Preparation Methods:

To prepare dried chamomile flowers tea, take 2-3 teaspoons of dried chamomile flowers. Boil it in hot water. To remove bitterness completely, you should steep chamomile for at least 20 minutes. Strain the liquid and add lemon or honey to get pleasant taste.

To treat digestive problems and for mind relaxation, chamomile tea is a good option. You can use dried chamomile flowers to make herbal bath. Chamomile tea is slightly bitter, yellow colored with apple aroma. Herbal bath might calm your mind and rejuvenate your skin. Stuff chamomile flowers in a hot muslin bag and apply over the affected area to reduce pain, ache and swelling. You can

gargle or swish mouthful of chamomile tea to soothe mouth ulcers.

Side effects:

Chamomile may interact with several medications including aspirin and similar pain medications, blood thinners, blood pressure drugs and certain heart medicines. If you’re allergic to ragweed, chamomile may also be allergic to you. Avoid taking chamomile, if you’re pregnant or nursing mother. Chamomile can cause severe womb (uterus) contraction and harm your inborn baby.

EVENING PRIMROSE:

Evening primrose is a wild flower that is native to Eastern and Central North American regions. Also known as Borage, the plant belongs to comfrey family. The plant is the richest source of calcium, mineral acids and potassium. The borage leaves gently strengthen adrenal functions, relieves joint pain, allergic skin itching (eczema), nerve pain and menstrual disorders. The plant oil (gamma linolenic acid and palmitic acid) present in evening primrose might boost immune system and prevent cancer. Evening primrose oil seeds contain abundant levels of these fragrant oils.

Fresh stems and leaves effectively treat irritated skin and irritated stomach.

Preparation Methods:

We cannot prepare evening primrose oil, as it involves extensive scientific procedures. Alternatively, you can use it in salads and vegetable dressings.

Prepare decoctions by infusing evening primrose leaves and stems in boiling water for 10 minutes. Filter and drink the herbal tea. You can use the decoction for internal and external purposes.

Culinary use:

In certain countries, evening primrose roots are consumed in the spring season. In France, evening primrose roots are used to garnish salads.

LAVENDER:

Lavender is a Mediterranean herb that thrives well in hot and sunny regions. You can identify the plant easily by looking into its beautiful colored flowers with characteristic fragrance. Lavender is being planted for ornamental and culinary purposes. The flowers of the plants may be lilac, blue, blackish purple or violet. The leaves contain specialized plant structures filled with essential lavender oil. You can use lavender tea or oil to treat several ailments including body odor problems, muscle pain or contraction, nerve weakness, joint pains, viral or fungal infections, heart weakness and low blood pressure problems.

Lavender oil/tea is an effective treatment for pimples, anxiety disorders, muscle pain, headache, colds, bowel control problems, insect bites, lice, nausea and mild skin problems. The characteristic aroma of lavender effectively repels insects and pests. You can also use lavender oil to light aroma lamps. Lavender lifts your spirits, improves sleep patterns, heals burns and wounds and promotes sense of wellbeing.

Lavender oil contains several volatile chemical substances including linalyl acetate, lavendulyl acetate, cineole, pinene, coumarins, rosmarinic acid, flavonoids, triterpenoids, lavendulyl acetate and terpinenol. You can use lavender leaves, stems and flowers to prepare herbal teas.

If you've persistent headache or muscle pain (fibromyalgia), apply few drops of Lavender oil generously onto the affected area or trigger points. Lavender oil massage reduces pain, muscle sores and nerve pain in humans and even in your dogs too!

In skin care and beauty arena, lavender oil is regarded as a facial care product and antiseptic. You can use lavender flower water as a natural perfume and to kill bacteria in the skin. To protect your clothes from moths, place lavender sachet bags in between your cloths. To keep flies and mosquitoes at bay, use lavender oil lamps or place fresh flowers in flower vases. Use lavender tea or oils as skin wash to treat flea bites or rashes.

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare Lavender tea by using either fresh or dried flowers. Take

handful of Lavender flowers and allow it to boil in water over 10 minutes. Cool and filter the decoction.

You can avail Lavender essential oil from any retail outlets. Avoid using Lavender oil internally. You can use Lavender oil for massage and as bath oils.

SILYMARIN:

Silymarin, also called as milk thistle is widely used an anti-addiction herb against alcoholism and to cleanse liver. You can use silymarin as a longevity tonic. If you're a nursing mother, you can use silymarin to increase breast milk secretion. Silymarin is an excellent bile secretion inducer, anti-cancer agent and liver tonic. The ripe seeds are often used for medicinal purposes.

Silymarin contains vitamin E, fatty acids, silychristin, silibinin and silydianin. These bioactive compounds contribute to about 50-70% of silymarin plant chemicals.

Silymarin rejuvenates liver cells by countering poisonous substances and viruses. A recovering alcoholic or any drug addict can take milk thistle extract daily to improve withdrawal symptoms. Most of the pharmaceutical indices and health agencies have recognized Silymarin as a liver protective herb. You can also use milk thistle tea to treat minor stomach problems including stomach acidity. If combined with dandelion or peppermint, milk thistle aids digestion.

Harvesting seeds:

You can harvest ripe, wild milk thistle seeds. One flower head contains up to 190 seeds. Cut the entire head along with the stem portion, tie upside down in warm and dark location for 5-7 days. The seeds usually fall after drying, and it can be collected for further processing.

Preparation Methods:

Silymarin is used as tea and tincture. You cannot prepare alcohol tincture as it involved several scientific procedures. However, you can easily prepare Silymarin tea in your kitchen. It is unpleasant to eat whole milk thistle seeds due to hard nature.

You can buy or harvest the seeds, grind into fresh powder and stored in a freezer. To grind the seeds, use high-speed blender or coffee grinder to powder the seeds. Milk thistle powder contains fatty acids and vitamin E which are unstable in warmer temperatures.

To prepare herbal tea, take four teaspoons finely ground milk thistle seed with whole fennel seed (2 teaspoonful), peppermint (1 teaspoonful) and dandelion root decoction (3 teaspoonful). Simmer the mixture for 20 minutes and strain the liquid into a container for future use.

Milk Thistle Powder Dosage

For mild cleansing, take one teaspoon of milk thistle powder, thrice daily. You can add 1-2 teaspoon of milk thistle powder in boiled water to prepare herbal tea. Milk thistle tea can aid and improve digestion.

Side effects:

In some individuals, Silymarin may cause mild diarrhea

MISTLETOE

You should not use Mistletoe unless directed by a professional healthcare provider. Mistletoe is a perennial herb widely distributed allover the Europe. Mistletoe is a parasitic (hemi-parasitic) herb that grows over other plants/trees. Mistletoe is useful to treat sleep disorders, cancers and elevated blood pressure. Mistletoe treats muscle contractions, nerve disorders and cause vomiting. Generally, stems and leaves of mistletoe are used for medicinal purposes.

Mistletoe contains powerful antioxidant flavonoids and amines including acetylcholine, tyramine, gaba, histamine, choline, oleanic acid, stigmasterol, ursolic acid, lupeol, betulinic acid, terpenoids, beta-sitosterol and oleanic acid. In certain parts of Europe, mistletoe extracts are used to treat cancers.

Mistletoe tea is also useful to treat arthritic pain, abnormal pulse and high blood pressure.

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare mistletoe tinctures or teas.

You can use either dried leaves or torn fresh leaves. Infuse handful of dried leaves in hot water (1 teaspoon to 1 pint of water) for over 15 minutes. Alternatively, chopped fresh leaves can be soaked overnight in water to prepare herbal tea.

Do not use berries, stalks and roots of mistletoe – These parts of the plant are poisonous.

Side Effects:

Do not consume mistletoe unless prescribed by a professional practitioner. Mistletoe is not safe for self-medication and it should be used under medical supervision. Injectable mistletoe is completely unsafe for self-treatment. Mistletoe can cause powerful contractions of the womb (uterus). If you’re pregnant or suspecting a pregnancy, avoid using mistletoe to prevent complications.

Eating mistletoe berries can cause fits-like (convulsion) symptoms in children.

First-time users should be careful to notice abnormal symptoms of allergy including swelling of eyelids, lips with difficulty in breathing.

OREGANO:

Oregano is a medicinal and cosmetic herb being used to treat diabetes, cuts, wounds and headache. Oregano can also be used as facial care due to its powerful antioxidant property. You can either purchase oregano oil from commercial vendors or prepare oregano tea using oregano leaves and stems.

Oregano is a powerful anti-viral herb with stimulant, gas-eliminating, anti-bacterial, anti-cancer and nervine tonic properties. In modern days, oregano is being used with pizza sauce.

Some of the active plant chemicals of oregano are caryophyllene, limonene, carvacrol, thymol, ocimene and rosmarinic acid. These chemicals present in the culinary herb effectively alleviate your pain symptoms, infections and delay aging. Clinical studies proved that oregano offers significant protection against stroke, cancers and heart diseases by inhibiting a harmful chemical in the body. Some researchers believe oregano might delay onset of diabetes in adults.

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare oregano tea by using the fresh plant. Take handful of oregano leaves and allow it to boil for 10-15 minutes. Allow it to cool and filter it for use. Oregano tea helps you to relieve stomach upset and headache. You can prepare concentrated oregano extract by using the whole herbs. The medical benefits and aroma of concentrated oregano extract are similar to oregano oil.

Culinary use:

Not only to prepare tomato sauces, you can use oregano along with holy basic to prepare healthy dishes. If you’re using dried herb instead of fresh herb, reduce the required amount by half due to its potency. Fresh oregano leaves are widely available in the summer.

Side Effects:

Avoid using oregano oil, if you are pregnant or planning to have a baby. In some individuals, oregano oil may cause severe skin irritation due to irritant property.

ROSEMARY

You can use leaves, flowers and stems of Rosemary to treat several medical problems including pain, joint pain, scabies, baldness, airway infections, certain heart problems, skin tone problems, general weakness, diabetes, blood pressure and memory problems.

In aromatherapy, rosemary is a prime herb in herbal steam therapy. Rosemary is an excellent treatment for lice and parasites.

Several research evidences demonstrated the pain-relieving, anti-cancer, anti-rheumatic, antispasmodic, antiviral, cardiotonic, insect repellent, muscle relaxing and stimulant properties of rosemary. The herb is a proven skin, heart and nerve tonic. Rosemary helps us to eliminate abdominal gas and relax muscles. The herb stimulates the brain by improving blood circulation. If you're suffering from low blood pressure problems, you should prefer rosemary than other medications.

Rosemary oil improves pain, sprains and nerve pains in diabetics. The herb oil blocks certain harmful chemicals (histamine) that cause asthma and allergy. Research studies are underway to examine the anti-diabetic property of rosemary. German Commission E approved internal use of Rosemary leaf to treat rheumatoid arthritis (joint pain) and blood circulatory disorders.

Rosemary contains linalool, borneol, camphor, camphene, romarinic acid, flavonoids and terpenoids. These plant chemicals are antioxidant in nature, improve memory and concentration/focus. To maintain or restore healthy hair, apply few drops of rosemary oils onto the scalp and massage gently. The herbal oil stimulates hair follicles and promotes hair growth. You should see the difference over time. Gentle massage using rosemary oil might prevent painful menstrual cramps, muscle sores and improve blood circulation.

Culinary use:

Rosemary is an additive herb in cooking due to its characteristic aroma. For cooking including hearty stews and roasted meats or chicken, you can use

chopped rosemary to add aroma and tangy taste. Rosemary vinegars are often used to dress vegetable salads. Rosemary twigs or leaves are often added as an aromatic addition to barbecue fires.

Preparation Methods:

You cannot prepare Rosemary oil by your own. Instead, you can purchase it over-the-counter in retail pharmacies or even in supermarkets.

PERIWINKLE:

Periwinkle is a common but medicinal herb with notable health benefits. You can treat a variety of medical problems including painful period problems, diarrhea, elevated blood pressure and memory problems by using periwinkle leaves and seeds.

Research studies have confirmed the urine-productive, vomit-inducing, sleep-inducing, anti-bacterial, anti-cancer, blood clotting benefits of periwinkle. Periwinkle contains beta-sitosterol, tannin, vincamine, ursolic acid, vincristine, p-coumaric acid and reserpine.

Periwinkle leaves and seeds contain vincamine and vinpocetine which naturally enhance memory in aging brains. Instead of procuring vincamine as a nutritional supplement, you should choose whole herb to produce extract or tea. Using the whole herb might be helpful to prepare a balanced blend of healing chemicals. In folk medicine, periwinkle is a preferable choice of herb to treat bleeding, cough and diabetes. Periwinkle tea improves the blood flow into your brain and delay the onset of memory problems such as dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Periwinkle is being considered as a brain food tea, and a natural memory enhancer.

Preparation Methods:

Take a teaspoon of dried periwinkle leaves. Add the leaves in boiling water and let it boil for 10-15 minutes. Strain the extract to remove herbs and you can consume the tea. You can also use periwinkle seeds to prepare the tea.

In the initial stages, you may not like the taste. But overtime, you'll get acquainted with the taste or at least due to its health benefits. To mask the bitter taste, you can add fruit juice or honey. Some people prefer dark colored leaf over light colored to prepare tea. Regardless of color, the health benefits are same.

Side Effects:

No known side effects are associated with periwinkle, if used as a whole herb. However, the nutritional supplement capsules/tablets may interact with blood thinning medications including aspirin and harm you.

THYME:

Thyme is common herb being used in aromatherapy, beauty clinics and oral care. You can use thyme to repel insects and pests. Thyme is generally used to treat cough, congestion, cuts and wounds, pain, certain viral infections, fungal infections, body odor and as an antioxidant. The leaves, flowers and stem of thyme possess digestive, cough-productive and nerve tonic properties.

Thyme belongs to mint family which has been used since the ancient times. Thyme contains rosmarinic acid, thymol and carvacrol. These chemicals treat cuts and wounds and prevent infections.

Thyme tea helps to calm down your nerves and promotes good sleep. Thyme tea alleviates cough, sore throat, nasal congestion and relieves body pain. The herb increase sweating and eliminate harmful body chemicals (toxins) in a safe manner.

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare pleasant-taste, healthy tea from thyme. Put a handful of thyme leaf in boiling water. Wait for 10-15 minutes, filter and use the extract. You also use thyme flowers to prepare herbal tea.

Place few sprigs of thyme leaves or flowers in linen cloth to repel pests and other insects.

Side Effects:

Thyme is generally considered as a safe herb. However, in excess, thyme may affect menstrual cycle (periods) in women. Do not use undiluted thyme oil as it may harm your skin. Avoid using thyme oil in kids and animals.

CALENDULA:

If you're living in Europe or any Western countries, Calendula is not an uncommon herb for you. Calendula is often used for culinary, beauty and medicinal purposes. Calendula treats cuts and wounds, insect bites, pain, certain infections and other minor problems.

Calendula contains saponins, resin, carotenoids, flavonoids and sterol. The flowers of calendula and its oils are generally used for medicinal purposes.

Calendula is characterized by deep orange, beautiful flowers with yellow petals. Calendula flower oil heals wounds, cuts, bruises, scrapes and insect bites. The German Commission E has confirmed the wound healing and anti-inflammatory (pain relieving) properties of Calendula. Calendula effectively treats oral thrush, a fungal infection of the mouth. To treat pimples and irritated skin, you can use calendula oil as a face wash. Fresh calendula petals decoction are often used to treat mouth sores, minor infections including eye infections and mouth infections.

Preparation Methods & Dosage:

Infuse fresh calendula petals in the boiling water and allow it to boil for 10-12 minutes. Allow the mixture to cool and filter it to treat infections.

You can also use the extract as herbal tea or as a tincture to treat wounds.

If you're suffering from sore throat, gargle with calendula petal tincture. You can see positive results within minutes. You can treat insect bites or take the insect sting out of your skin by applying fresh calendula flowers onto the affected skin.

Native Herbs of the United States:

VALERIAN:

Valerian is a perennial flowering herb with white or pinkish colored fragrant flowers that blooms in summer. The herb is native to certain parts of Asia and Europe. Since early days, valerian is being used to treat migraine headache, sleep problems and convulsion (fits). The herb acts on the neurotransmitter receptors of the brain just like sleep-inducing medications. But unlike medications, the herb does not cause habitual use, addiction or severe sedation.

The herb yields yellowish-green to brownish-yellow oil from dried roots. The oil yield depends on the location of cultivation.

Valerian is a best addiction treatment, heart tonic, adaptogen and nervine tonic.

The roots of valerian contain beta-ionone, calcium, manganese, valeric acid, ascorbic acid, magnesium, quercetin and acetic acid.

Preparation methods:

Valerian should be taken as extract or capsules. Do not prepare valerian tea or infusion. Heating the herb may cause destruction of volatile oils.

Valerian side effects:

Valerian is generally considered as safe in recommended doses. However, in overdoses, valerian may cause stomach upset and over-stimulation of the brain. Large doses may result in stomach ache and sense of mental dullness or mild depression. Safety of Valerian is not confirmed in pregnant women; hence you should avoid valerian during pregnancy.

St. JOHN'S WORT:

Indigenous to Europe, St. John's Wort is a perennial herb with creeping rhizomes (root). The erect stems can grow up to 1 m height with opposite-sided, narrow, oblong leaves. The yellow-green colored leaves present with transparent dots on the lower part of the leaf. The herb produces yellow-colored flowers with black-dotted five petals measures up to 2.5 cm. The flowers are commonly seen in late spring through early to mid summer. Upon crushing of seeds or flower buds, you can get purple or reddish liquid.

The herb thrives well in temperate climates with dominant rainfall patter. The herb's quality depends on the climatic and environmental conditions.

You can use herb tops and flowers of St. John's Wort to treat arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, skin infections, depression, ear infections, anxiety, nerve back pain, cold sores, muscle sores, nasal congestion, burns, dysentery, intestinal worms and bed wetting problems. St. John's Wort is an excellent nervine tone and antioxidant.

The herb contains tannins, resin, glycosides, flavonoids and volatile oils. St. John's Wort oil can treat breast tenderness, sciatica and damaged skin.

Preparation Methods:

St. John's Wort tea can be prepared by infusing fresh leaves in boiling water. The tea is a nervine tonic that treats depressive disorders. You can also use St. John's Wort oil for topical skin application.

Infusing fresh flowers of St. John's Wort may yield beautiful red colored oil that alleviates pain.

St. Johns Wort side effects:

St. Johns Wort interacts with drug such as MAOIs and SSRIs and oral contraceptive pills. St. Johns Wort may cause light phobia (photosensitivity) and biological stress in certain individuals. The herb may aggravate psychotic behavior in schizophrenia (mental disorder) patients. Bipolar disorder and major depressive disorder patients should avoid taking St. John's Wort. Do not give St. John's Wort to children, unless prescribed by a physician.

RED CLOVER:

Red clover is native to Western Asia, Europe and Northwest African countries but naturalized to other climatic regions. The perennial herb is short-lived that grows to 20-80 cm tall. The leaves arrange in alternate pattern, each leaf measures 15-30 mm long and half the size broad with pale green color. The flowers are dark pink color with broad, paler base.

The flowering tops of red clover are being used as longevity tonic and to treat lung infection, female hormone problems, menopause and bone disorders. The herb contains diuretic, anticancer, antifungal and estrogen-secreting properties. The medicinal properties of red clover are attributed to isoflavones which acts as estrogen (female hormone) in humans.

Herbalists believe red clover is a blood purifier and treats childhood eczema (allergic skin disorder).

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare an excellent herbal tea with red clover and honey by infusion methods. Some people use red clover with black cohosh to prepare poultice.

Red Clover side effects:

Red clover is generally safe in dietary levels. Avoid using red clovers, if you're pregnant. In higher doses, red clover may cause delayed blood clotting, muscle ache, skin rashes, nausea, headache and vaginal bleeding.

Red clover is contraindicated in women with history of uterus fibroids, breast cancer and ovarian cancer. Red clover may interact with blood clotting medications including coumarin.

SAW PALMETTO:

Often referred as Peruvian ginseng, the herb is related to radish, often seen in South Carolina to Florida. The scrubby little tree grows up to 6-10 feet with spiky leaves and reddish-brown oblong berries. Dried berry is often used for medicinal purposes.

In folklore medicine, saw palmetto is being used to treat sexual disorders, prostate problems, male pattern baldness, digestive disorders and fluid retention problems. Saw palmetto contains several bioactive compounds such as tannins, fixed oil, resin and steroidal saponin. Certain chemicals present in saw palmetto bark prevents excessive conversion of male hormone (testosterone) into dihydrotestosterone (DHT) that cause hair loss and pimples. You can also use saw palmetto berries to soothe cough and to aid sleep.

Preparation Methods:

Saw palmetto berry prostate tea:

To prepare herbal blend, crush the saw palmetto berries and add nettle, cinnamon and maca. Take one teaspoon of the blend and add one cup of water. Boil the mixture and simmer it for 10 minutes.

Saw Palmetto side effects:

No side effects reported, even in pregnant women.

SPEEDWELL:

Although speedwell is not native to the United States, the herb has been naturalized and often found in open, grassy regions. The plant grows well in dry fields and uplands and widely found from Michigan to Tennessee and in certain parts of Canada. The leaves of the herb presents as opposite, obtuse, narrowed and oblong shaped. Stem is often long, hairy with root joints.
Speedwell is generally used to treat cough, cuts and wounds. Research evidences suggest that speedwell is a potent anticancer, sweat-inducing, cough-producing herb. The flowering plant contains tannins, organic acids, flavonoids, sugars and resin. The flowers are very small, pale blue in color with four lobes that blooms during May to August. The fruits are compressed heart-shaped with numerous flat seeds.

Speedwell can be used as herbal tea to treat cough, sweat problems, pain and liver disorders. The herbal extract can treat allergic skin reactions, wounds and skin irritations.

Preparation Methods:

Prepare herbal tea infusion using the flowering tops.

Side effects:

None reported

SOLOMON'S SEAL:

You can identify Solomon's seal by multi-jointed, thick rooted, curved stem that give rise to leaves. The herb yield flowers in spring season. The flowers are yellowish-green or whitish in color with bell-shaped droop from the leaf axils. The rhizome of the perennial herb is long, creeping and occasionally branches. The leaves are oval-shaped, pointed and softly hairy with veins. The herb thrives well in woods and shady banks. Solomon's seal is widely found in temperate zones of North America, China and Japan.

Solomon's seal is useful to treat cuts and wounds, allergies and nasal congestion. The herb is a known anti-rheumatic, sweat-inducer and skin tonic. The plant chemicals contain vitamin A, convallamarin, quercitol and convallarin.

Preparation Methods:

Roots of Solomon's seal are preferred to prepare teas and extracts. You can eat boiled, young leaves and shoots; dried rhizomes can be powdered for herbal teas. North American tribes use dried rhizome powder of Solomon's seal to treat pain, stomach problems and skin diseases.

Side effects:

Do not use Solomon's seal if you're suffering from digestive disorders. The plant chemicals present in Solomon's seal may cause diarrhea and nausea.

RASPBERRY LEAF

Raspberry leaf is a perennial herb with prickly and biennial canes. Traditionally, raspberry leaf is preferred in folk remedies due to higher levels of tannins, vitamins and minerals. The tangle of thorny vines tastes good but the medicinal properties are in the leaves.

Raspberry leaves are generally used to treat sore throat, colds, diarrhea, menstrual pain problems, pregnancy and childbirth problems and bedwetting in children. The bark and leaves of raspberry leaves possess diuretic, uterine tonic, anti-cancer properties. The herb contains pectin, fragrine, tannin, sugars, phosphorus, citric acid, vitamin A, B, C, E and malic acid.

Preparation Methods

Raspberry is commonly consumed as teas and liquid extracts. Raspberry leaf tea contains abundant levels of tannin that effectively treats diarrhea, abdominal cramps and nausea in children.

You can prepare strong infusion of raspberry leaf tea by adding 1-2 teaspoons of dried raspberry leaves and add one cup of boiling water. Steep it in a covered vessel for 15 minutes, and allow it to cool for use. You can optionally add stevia or lemon for flavor.

Raspberry side effects:

In some countries, raspberry was used to facilitate childbirth. Do not use fresh raspberry leaves; it may induce nausea. Use only completely dried raspberry leaves.

SKULLCAP:

Skullcap is a perennial herb that grows 5-100 cm tall. Some species are aquatic and some species are sub-shrubs. The herb has opposite leaves architecture with four-angled stems. The flowers has characteristically unique typical shield on the calyx with upper and lower lips. Native Americans used skullcap to treat women's problems and rabies. Even today, you can see skullcap as a popular herb to treat muscle tension, blood pressure problems, headache, sleep problems and anxiety. Skullcap prevents alcoholism and aid quit smoking. The herb is a good nervine tonic that increases breast milk secretion.

The herb contains zinc, ascorbic acid, lignin, calcium, potassium, scutellarin and tannin.

The health benefits of skullcap are attributed to flavonoids including baicalein. The compound possesses cardiovascular and anti-inflammatory benefits that inhibit several inflammatory chemicals such as histamine, leucotriene and nitric oxide.

Preparation Methods:

Skullcap is often consumed as tincture or herbal tea. Tincture is generally prepared from fresh herb. You can prepare fresh herbal tea by infusing the herb in boiling water and simmer it for 10 minutes. Try to drink the tea when it is hot.

Skullcap side effects:

Skullcap is generally safe in normal amounts. Don't take overdose! It may cause giddiness, confusion and even fits (convulsions). Avoid using skullcap, if you're pregnant or a nursing mother.

WATERCRESS:

Watercress is a rapidly growing, semi-aquatic, perennial plant native to Asia and European countries. The plant is related to radish, garden cress and mustard with tangy, piquant flavor. The hollow stem of the herb are floating with pinnately compound leaves. The herb produces small, green and white flowers in clusters. Most of the countries regarded watercress as a weed.

Watercress is nutritional culinary herb with high levels of vitamins and minerals. Watercress aid digestion, coughing up lung mucus and stimulate the brain. Since from ancient days, Watercress is being used with cayenne, garlic and onions to treat cough and bronchitis. Watercress is a natural urine-productive herb that should be a part of your healthy diet.

Take watercress regularly to cleanse the body toxins and to flush out excessive water. Watercress contains abundant levels of vitamin C that aids iron absorption. Watercress tonic is an excellent longevity tonic and digestive that normalizes blood glucose levels.

The stems and leaves of watercress contain calcium, vitamin A, C, E, nicotinamide, volatile oils, phosphorus, manganese, iron, copper and glycoside.

Preparation Methods:

Use handful of fresh watercress and dandelion leaves to prepare herbal infusion.

How to grow watercress?

Cultivation of watercress in your garden is easy if you have knowledge on hydroponic cultivation. The plant thrives well in semi-aquatic and alkaline water.

Watercress side effects:

Wild watercress can pass deadly liver fluke infection. Do not use wild watercress. Use commercially grown watercress only.

BALSAM FIR:

Balsam fir is a native North American fit often found in Eastern, Central Canada and parts of northeastern United States. Balsam fir is a medium-sized, evergreen tree that grows up to 14-20 meters tall with narrow conic crown. The bark of the tree is smooth and grayish color that yields resins. The long needle-like leaves are dark green in color that rises from leaf bases. The erect cones are long and dark purple in color that disintegrate and release seeds during September.

Balsam fir is used to treat sore throat, lung infections, colds, congestion, cough, pain, cuts and wounds and sweating problems. Balsam fir oil is an approved, nontoxic rodent repellent and air freshener.

Preparation methods:

Essential oil of balsam fir is commercially distilled for aromatherapy. You can prepare herbal tea by infusing twigs, bark or leaves in boiling water for 10 minutes. Steep it and allow it to cool for consumption.

Balsam Fir side effects:

The essential oil of balsam fir may cause irritation to the skin. Avoid using undiluted oil.

CATNIP:

Catnip is a perennial, short-lived herb that grows up to 20-39 inch tall and wide. The plant mimics certain features of mint family but presents with brown-green foliage. The leaves are ovate to triangular with coarse-toothed leaves. The flowers are whitish-colored with fine pinkish spots and fragrance. The flowering season is from late spring through autumn.

Catnip is often grown as ornamental plant in gardens that attracts house cats and butterflies. The plant is drought-resistant and repels insects including squash bugs and aphids.

Catnip is useful to treat sleep problems, colds, abdominal cramps, menstrual problems, anxiety, digestive disorders, headache and sleep-inducer in pets. Research evidences proved catnip as a coolant, nervine tonic, sweat-inducer, anti-cancer, uterus-stimulant and antioxidant. The flowering tops and leaves are often used for medicinal purposes. The herb contains tannins, volatile oils including geraniol, carvacrol, nepetol, thymol and citronellol and rosamarinic acid. These oils can be industrially extracted by steam distillation process. For restless children, catnip oil along with chamomile is often used to induce sleep.

Preparation methods:

You can sprinkle catnip leaves on chewable toys of your lovable pets. You can prepare herbal infusion for human purpose.

ECHINACEA:

Echinacea is herbaceous, perennial, drought-tolerant plant that grows up to 3-4 feet high. The erect stems and hairy leaves rise from taproot. The herb's flower is reddish-purple or yellow in color that yields 3-4 angled fruits with dark brown band with cone-shaped head. Most often stems and roots are preferred to use than flowers. Echinacea contains sesquiterpene, essential oils such as caryophylene and humulene, polysaccharides, betaine, glycoside, polyacetylene, isobutylalklamine and resin.

You can use Echinacea to treat common medical problems including sinus problems, yeast infections, colds, pain, ear infections, gum inflammation, and insect bites. You can boost your immune system by taking Echinacea regularly.

The herb cause alleviates your pain of cold sores (herpes virus infection) by numbing it. To treat insect bites, you can prepare a skin wash from fresh flowers. The herbal remedy soothes itching and rashes.

Preparation Methods:

To treat your problems, choosing a proper dosage is important. You can prepare Echinacea tea by infusing the stems of roots in hot water over time. The herbal tea can be used for external applications including poultices and compresses. You cannot prepare Echinacea tincture.

Echinacea side effects:

If you're allergic to ragweed or diagnosed with chronic infections including HIV/AIDS or tuberculosis, lupus and rheumatoid arthritis, avoid using Echinacea.

GOLDENROD:

Goldenrod is a common herb that is widely found throughout the US and Canada. Goldenrod is highly useful for treatment for kidney problems, sore throat, bladder infections, sinus congestion, respiratory infections, diarrhea and congestion. The leaves and flowering tops of goldenrod are often used for medicinal purposes.

Goldenrod contains several essential plant chemicals including tannins, saponins, flavonoids and other essential oils. Goldenrod's act primarily on the kidneys and it is the safest and most effective diuretic-antiseptic herb used in treating in treating bladder infections and kidney stones.

Preparation methods:
Brewed, warm goldenrod tea is golden-yellowish in color that imparted from its flowers. The aftertaste of tea is slightly bitter and you can add honey to taste good. To prepare herbal tea, use 1-2 teaspoons of goldenrod powder to one cup of hot water. Infuse the mixture in a covered vessel over 10 minutes. You can drink the tea between meals.

Side effects:

None reported

BAYBERRY:

Bayberry is a shrub that grows up to 40 feet high. The leaves are 1-4 inches long, wedge-shaped, narrow with few saw-like structure and release odor upon crushing. The flowers appear during March – May. The flowers are cylindrical, yellow clustered; female flowers are green-colored and male flowers are cylindrically-yellow clustered. The fruits may remain in tree over years that yield one round seed with whitish wax.

Bayberry is traditionally used to treat miscarriage, excessive menstruation, sore throat, nasal congestion and elevated blood pressure. The roots and berries of bayberry contain myricitrin. If used with ginger, the herb effectively treats blood circulation problems and flu.

Bayberry increase sweating and treats dysentery and fever.

Preparation Methods:

Use root bark and poultice to prepare decoction. Infuse the plant parts in boiling water to prepare decoction.

Bayberry side effects:

In higher doses, bayberry can increase blood pressure with marked loss of potassium salts. If you’re pregnant or nursing mother, avoid taking bayberry.

BEE BALM:

Bee balm is a perennial plant with lanceolate, slender and serrated laves with hairless stems. Bee balm plant can be characteristically identified by presence of white, pink, red and white flowers. The flowers contain crowded head-like clusters with leafy bracts. The plant grows up to 2-4 feet tall and flowers bloom in early to later summer. The herb prefers to grow in waterway or in bog garden but tolerate wet soil. Bee balm is used for medicinal and culinary purposes.

Leaves and aerial parts of bee balm contain rosemarnic acid, thymol and carvacrol. These plant chemicals possess uterus-stimulating, antifungal, antioxidant and pain-relieving properties.
Bee balm was used by colonial settlers to treat fever and colds, digestive disorders and weakness.

Preparation Methods:

You can use flowers or fresh/dried leaves of bee balm to prepare decoction. Infuse handful of dried parts in boiling water for 10 minutes. Cool and use it as herbal tea, skin and eyewashes.

For culinary purpose, separate the petals (flower) and garnish over fruit salads. The flower possess strong minty flavor.

How to Grow Bee Balm?

Plant the herb with spacing of 1-2 feet apart, during spring or fall. Use tiller or garden fork to loosen the soil up to a depth of 12-15 inches and mix organic compost. Place the plant, cover the root ball gently and carefully. Water the plant thoroughly, daily.

BONESET:

Boneset belongs to aster family that contains 36-60 species depending on plant classification. Most of the species are perennial that grow between 0.5-3 m tall. Few plants remain as shrubs. Boneset is native to Northern hemisphere; the herb is being grown as ornamental plants in Asia.

The aerial part of boneset is well known for pain-relieving, immune boosting, anti-bacterial, anti-cancer, immuno-stimulant and bitter properties. You can use boneset for treatment of colds, flu, chest infections, nerve weakness, sweating problems, vomiting and inflammation. Boneset contains volatile oils, resin, flavonoids, kaempferol, quercetin and terpenoids.

Native American people used boneset to treat cold, fever, flu, fractures and muscle sores.

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare boneset tea by infusing whole herb in boiling water for at least 15 minutes. You can add honey to mask bitterness of boneset tea.

Boneset side effects:

Although boneset is good for health, don’t overdo!

In overdoses, boneset may cause diarrhea, nausea or vomiting. If you’re pregnant or allergic to feverfew or ragwort and chamomile, avoid using boneset.

DEER TONGUE:

Deer tongue is a Native American herb that is used to prepare smoking blends and to improve flavor tobacco. The aroma of deer tongue is due to coumarin (anti-coagulant chemical) present in leaves. The leaves are smooth and spatulate-shaped. Deer tongue treats pain and inflammation, suppress fever by inducing sweating.

Preparation Methods:

The herbal bland can be used to smoke or in addition with nicotine.

Deer Tongue side effects:

The herb contains crystallized coumarin in leaves. Avoid taking deer tongue to blood thinners (medications) to prevent bleeding risks.

SNAKEROOT:

Snakeroot is traditionally cultivated and used in Chinese medicine since the middle ages. Early Americans used Snakeroot as a supportive treatment to quinine to suppress fever and to treat snakebites. Dried roots of snakeroot possess anti-cancer, vomit-inducing, uterus-stimulating, sweat-inducing and bitter taste properties. Snakeroot contains aristolochic acid which is a potent anti-cancer agent.

Preparation Methods:

Snakeroot tincture cannot be prepared by our own, and it is not available commercially too. You can apply fresh leaves to treat snakebites, if other treatment options are not available.

Snakeroot side effects:

Do not take snakeroot internally. It is highly poisonous. Snakeroot poisoning is reported in kidney failure cases that may lead to serious problems.

SUNFLOWER:

We’re using sunflower oil for culinary and nutritional purposes. Sunflower oil increase urine output and it can be used as massage oil. Sunflower seeds and flowers use cinnamic acid, magnesium, chlorgenic acid, 1, 8-cineole, alpha-amyrin, alpha-terpineol, beta-sitosterol, alpha-pinene, calcium, citric acid, choline and alpha-tocopherol.

Sunflower oils can be obtained by pressing the seeds. You can eat roasted or raw sunflower seeds, which is a richest source of antioxidants, vitamins B, D, E, K and proteins. You can use sunflower oil for skin care purposes too!

Sunflower oil is being used in aromatherapy as a carrier.

Preparation Methods:

Take 2 oz of sunflower seeds and boil with one quart of water. Reduce the decoction to 12 oz. Strain the decoction and add 6 oz of Holland gin and sugar, respectively. Take 1-2 teaspoonful of syrup 3-4 times a day.

BETH ROOT:

Beth root is traditionally used in folk medicine as a tonic to treat hormone problems and menopause in women. The herb increase breast milk secretion. Early Americans used Beth root to treat cough and vomiting.

Beth root is a perennial wildflower that blooms with star-like purple flowers. Beth root contains saponins that are being used in pharmaceutical industries.

Preparation methods:

The root can be used to prepare syrup or a tincture.

Cough syrup:

Take one lb (each) of beth root and poplar bark. Boil it in a covered vessel for at least 15-20 minutes. Strain the mixture and add 7 lbs of loaf sugar and simmer it. You can infuse honey with the mixture to soothe cough.

How to Grow Beth Root

You can wildcraft beth root to grow the herb in your garden.

Beth Root side effects:

Avoid using beth root during pregnancy and breastfeeding a baby.

BLOODROOT:

You can see Blood root in Nova Scotia to Florida, Westward to Nebraska and all forests of North America. The herb's habitat is low hillsides with rich woods. The leaves are rounded, palmately lobed with clefts. The flowers are rarely pinkish with golden centered and 8-12 petals that bloom during April and May. The rootstocks are thick, long with fibrous roots filled with orange-red juice.

You can use blood root externally to treat skin cancers, skin tags, cough, bacterial infections and to prevent cancer.

Bloodroot contains sanguinarine that can treat certain cancers, warts and moles. In early 1800's physicians used bloodroot with zinc chloride to treat certain skin cancer. Bloodroots dissolve abnormal skin growth. However, do not use bloodroot to treat black or blue colored skin tumors. Bloodroot is widely available as cough preparations, mouthwashes and toothpastes. The antiseptic nature of bloodroot kills teeth bacteria.

Preparation Methods:

We cannot prepare bloodroot tinctures or oils. You can purchase it commercially to apply topically over skin blemishes, skin tags and moles.

How to Grow Bloodroot

You should know the wildcrafting technique to grow in your home, if you've suitable garden space. The plant thrives well in rich, deep soil with shade of hardwoods. Also grow well in limestone outcroppings.

Bloodroot side effects:

Bloodroot and root juice are extremely poisonous, if consumed in the raw state.

CHAGA MUSHROOM:

Cinder conks or Chaga mushroom is the prime medicinal herb for tribal people of Siberia. The mushroom is widely present in northern climates, mostly in North America, Poland, North America and Western Siberia. Chaga mushroom is a parasitic fungus that grows over birch tree. As a process of parasitism, the chaga mushroom kills the host tree.

You can use Chaga mushroom to boost immune system, prevent cancer and as a longevity tonic. Chaga mushroom is an excellent immune booster, pain reliever, antioxidant and anti-viral. The whole mushroom contains several biopolysaccharides.

How to Grow Chaga

If you have mastering skills in wildcrafting, you can grow the herb in your own garden. In Canada, medicinal conks can be harvest from public lands.

Preparation Methods:

Chaga mushroom is often consumed as mushroom tea or coffee. You can also prepare liquid extracts.

Chaga mushroom coffee:

To prepare decoction, take 2 tablespoons of dried, chopped chaga mushroom and add 750 ml of water. Prepare a blend of carob, chicory, ginger, sassafras, cinnamon and mix it with the decoction. Boil the mixture for 10 minutes. You can add stevia or agave or honey as sweetener.

The chaga mushroom brew is slightly bitter in taste with dark color, similar to coffee.

Chaga side effects:

No reported side effects. However, certain individuals including children, pregnant women and nursing mothers should use Chaga with caution.

CHAPARRAL:

Chaparral is a low-desert dwarf shrub with dark-green leaves. The herb is native to desert regions of the Mexico and United states. The Native Americans use Chaparral to treatment liver diseases, tumors and as sunscreen. Traditional Mexican herbalists use Chaparral as a bath or liniment to alleviate arthritis pain and inflammation.

Chaparral possesses medicinal properties to treat eczema, psoriasis, skin infections, bruises, cuts and sores.

Preparation Methods:

Chaparral is poorly soluble in water. To prepare lotions, decoctions or alcohol-based tinctures should be used.

SUNNY DAY OIL:

Chaparral oil is a proven sunscreen lotion to prevent skin damage from harmful sunrays. Take 10 drops of chaparral tincture, 4 tablespoons of shea butter, 2 tablespoons beeswax, 1 oz wheat germ oil or vitamin E oil, 2 tablespoons lecithin, 3 ounce coconut oil, 4 oz St. Johns wort infused oil and 1 tablespoon of PABA. Except PABA and lecithin powder, combine the mixture and boil it with occasional stirring. Mix PABA and lecithin powder and 10 drops of Chaparral tincture. You can also add any fragrant essential oil.

Chaparral side effects:

For external use only!

Do not use Chaparral oil or products for internal use. It may cause serious liver diseases. Chaparral should be avoided by pregnant women, nursing mothers and children.

Chaparral antiseptic Hoof and Paw wash for pets:

You can prepare strong decoction of chaparral that can be used as antiseptic wash to treat hoof and paw infections of your pet. The herbal decoction treats fungal infections in your effectively!

CASCARA SARGADA:

You can identify all variants of cascara sargada that belongs to buckthorn family. The plant is widely found in Pacific Northwest. The herb is generally used to treat constipation (inability to pass stools). The bark of cascara sargada contains tannins, emodin, 1, 8-dihydroxy-anthracene, cascarosides, frangulin, flavonoids, magnesium, aloe-emodin, ash and calcium.

Dried and aged bark contains anthroquinones that are digestible by belly bacteria to a chemical that aid stools passage.

Preparation Methods:

Infuse few chops of Cascara sagrada barks (aged) in boiled water for 10 minutes. Strain it and drink to alleviate your problems. Aged cascara sagrada bark is bitter in taste that exerts gentle laxative action.

Cascara Sagrada side effects:

If you've belly pain or diarrhea, avoid using Cascara Sagrada. Do not use the herb if you're pregnant or nursing a kid. Do not give Cascara Sagrada to children under 12 and adults with appendicitis. Not recommended for long-term use. Discontinue cascara sagrada use, if you experience watery diarrhea. Avoid using young barks as it may cause vomiting and belly pain (spasm). In some individuals, cascara sagrada may cause potassium loss.

BUTTERNET:

Butternet belongs to black walnut family and often used in combination to prepare herbal blends.

Butternut is a strong laxative (motion-inducer) without causing belly cramps. Inner parts of butternut contain tannin and juglone that treats parasitic or worm infections, pain and liver problems. Native Americans press fresh butternut to prepare butternut oil that effectively treats tapeworm infections, headaches, rheumatism and toothache.

The plant is native to Eastern US and Canada, widely distributed in mountains of Georgia. The deciduous plant prefers forest regions along stream banks with well-drained soils. The flowers are inconspicuous, yellowish green in color that presents with new leaves. The flowering season is spring. The pinnate leaves are compounded, opposite-sided with yellow green color. The fruits are similar to black walnuts with small green-tinged lemon shape. The barks are broadly ridged with light greyish color. The inner bark can be used as herbal medicine.

Preparation methods:

You can prepare butternut bark tea or powder by using chopped barks. Put few chops of butternut barks in water and heat it for 15-20 minutes. Simmer and cool it for use.

Butternut side effects:

Avoid using butternut, if you’re suffering from gall bladder stones.

BUGLEWEED:

Bugleweed is common in North American regions often found in marshy areas and water banks. The plant prefers shady areas with plentiful water. The herb belongs to mint family; however, you can't smell mint flavor in Bugleweed. The perennial plant is a creepy runner with rosette of leaves. The shiny oval shaped leaves mimics spinach leaves. The plant forms a carpet-like groundcover. The flowers are pink, blue or whitish colored. Bugleweed contains ellagic acid, phenolic acid, rosamarinic, chlorogenic and caffeic acids with pimaric acid. You can use flowers, stem, leaves and aerial parts of bugleweed.

Bugleweed is a good heart tonic, female hormone optimizer, nervine tone, urine-productive herb. The antioxidant herb suppresses cough symptoms, increase urine output and constricts blood vessels. You can also use bugleweed to treat certain ailments of your pet.

Bugleweed treats overactive thyroid problems and normalizes female hormones (estrogen) in women. The herb treats elevated levels of thyroxine (T3) and treats thyroid hormone disorders. If you're in tension or irritability, the nerve calming effects of bugleweed alleviate the symptoms including pain. Like humans, bugleweed treats overactive thyroid problems in your pet cats too!

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare herbal tea by combining bugleweed leaves with gromwell and/or lemon balm. The blend effectively treats overactive thyroid problems. But don't give this to your pet cats. For veterinary purposes, special procedures are required to prepare the blend.

Bugleweed side effects:

Generally, bugleweed is safe to use in normal doses, even in long-term use. In higher doses, it can harm thyroid functions. Avoid using bugleweed if you're pregnant or a nursing mother.

CHICORY ROOT:

Chicory is a common additive herb in beverages, particularly in coffee. The rigid plant is commonly seen in waste places and fields. The branching stem grows up to 1-3 feet high. The bright, deep azure to gray blue or whitish or pinkish flower is broad and seen as small clusters.

You can drink chicory teas regularly to flush out excess water from body. Chicory beverage can prevent/treat harmful uric acid accumulation in the body without depleting potassium and other essential salts. Chicory is a powerful urine-inducing herb with stool-productive, pain-reliving, anti-cancer, liver-protective and coolant properties. Although, the long taproot of chicory plant is often used, you can use the leaves for herbal bath.

The chicory root contains fixed oils, inulin, cichoriin, bitters, tannins, pectin, fixed oils and sugars. The leaves are spatulae shaped with irregular edges contain esculetin, resin, inulin, frutos and resin. The flowering season is July to October. The plant is widely seen in the United States and Canada.

Chicory is well-known for the substitute or additive for coffee. Herbalists regarded chicory as a bitter digestive tonic that you should take regularly to support immune system, pain problems, infections, liver and heart health. You can also treat several medical problems including rheumatism, gout and jaundice, if taken with dandelion.

Preparation Methods:

You can prepare chicory decoction, just like coffee.

Chicory-dandelion root coffee:

Have a great morning with chicory-dandelion root brew for a mellow taste. The brew lowers constipation and pain symptoms.

To prepare decoction, take 2-4 gm of dried chicory and pour boiling water, steep for at least 10 minutes. Strain the mixture and add equal parts of dandelion root. You can add a teaspoon of cinnamon to add flavor.

Herbal chicory root coffee:

To cleanse your body, start your day with herbal chicory root coffee. The blend is sweet, dark and spicy with urine-productive and pain relieving benefits.

Prepare the herbal blend using dandelion root, equal parts of dry, chopped white willow bark, chicory root and Sarsaparilla root.

To prepare decoction, take one tablespoon of blended mixture and add one cup of water. Simmer the mixture for at least 10 minutes. Allow it to cool and have 2-3 cups of drink, every day. You can optionally add grated ginger for spicy flavor and reishi mushroom for energy.

How to Grow Chicory

Chicory is generally preferred for its bright, deep blue colored flowers that attract bees and small birds. When compared to wild conditions, the plant grown in garden has short taproot. Still, you can use it as herbal beverage after get it roasted.

Chicory side effects:

If you’re suffering from gall bladder stones, avoid taking chicory. It may aggravate the symptoms.

COSTMARY:

You can use Costmary leaves to prepare herbal tea or infusion oil to prepare pain rub or herbal bath. Some of the essential oils present in costmary are t-carveol, beta-thujone, dihydrocarveol, t-dihydrocarvone and dihydrocarveol isomer c-carveol. The perennial plant is generally present in Northern temperate zones. You can identify the plant with long-lived flowers, daisy-like clusters on long stalks which bloom in summer. The oblong leaves are silver green in color with mint and balsam-like fragrance.

Costmary possesses astringent properties that also treats pain.

Preparation methods:

Fresh costmary leaves can be used in salads or infuse it in teas. You can use dried aerial parts in pot-pourri and retain the fragrance.

Costmary infused oil:

Infuse costmary leaves in olive or safflower oil and allow it to steep for four days in hot sun. Strain the mixture and use the oil to treat pains including low back and joint pains.

How to Grow Costmary

You need to plant the herb in sunny area. You can propagate the root in spring season.

Costmary side effects:

Costmary may induce blood circulation in your womb (uterus) and bring on delayed menstruation. Avoid using Costmary if you pregnant.

CRANBERRY:

Cranberry is an evergreen dwarf shrub commonly seen in acidic bogs and cooler regions across the continental USA. The herb is a relative of huckleberries, bilberries and blueberries. The flowers are distinctively dark pink in color with reflexed petals. The berry is larger than leaves which are initially white in color that turns into deep red upon ripening. The edible fruit is acidic and sweet in taste.

Native to North America, cranberries are rich in antioxidants that aid your heart health and longevity. Cranberry extracts prevent tooth delay, treats urinary tract infections, prolonged kidney disease, diarrhea, diabetes, minor wounds and stomach problems.

Cranberry juice is not just only for oral care and urinary tract infections, you can use it as heart tonic and anti-stress treatment. The berry contains several anti-cancer chemicals such as natural sugars, arbutin, colorful anthocyanins and oligomeric proanthocyanidins.

Preparation Methods:

You can buy cranberry powder commercially if you don’t want to prepare cranberry juice. But drinking the fresh juice is also good for health.

FEVERFEW:

You can use aerial parts of Feverfew to treat headache, blood circulation, allergies and worm infections. Feverfew is a best insect and pest repellent. Feverfew contains tannins, volatile oils and sesquiterpene lactones. Feverfew belongs to marigold family that give rise to daisy-like flowers with characteristic fragrance.

You can prevent heart attacks by preventing blood clots in the blood vessels. You can also treat migraine, sleep problems, tension headache, joint pain, period problems, fever and general weakness.

Preparation Methods:

Needless to prepare herbal tea, just chew 2 or 3 leaves, every day. To make your pets flea-free, infuse fresh herb in boiling water for 15 minutes. Strain and apply the herbal blend on to fur and skin.

Feverfew tincture:

Chop handful of fresh flowering tops and infuse a cup of hot water. Allow it to stand for 1-2 hours. Cool and strain it. You can use the tincture to rinse your cat to keep fleas at bay.

How to grow Feverfew?

You can grow the perennial plant partly shady areas. Choose spring or summer seasons to sow seeds.

Feverfew Side Effects:

If you’re pregnant or allergic to ragweed, do not use feverfew. In some individuals, feverfew may cause mouth ulcers.

FALSE UNICORN ROOT:

Root portion of false unicorn root is generally used to treat fertility problems, hormonal disturbances and period problem in women. The perennial herb contains helonin, calcium oxalate and diosgenin. The raceme portion of flowers is small, star-shaped becomes yellow up on aging. In summer, you can see flowering season. The leaves are smaller and lanceolate. The herb is native to Eastern-North America, often found in bogs.

The root is gently curved that resembles unicorn's horn. Native American people often false unicorn root to prevent miscarriage and to treat female hormone problems. False unicorn root contains several plant hormones that are chemically similar to female hormones. Take false unicorn root to normalize hormonal disturbance and associated infertility.

Preparation Methods:

Take 1-2 gm of dried false unicorn root powder and infuse in a cup of water. Take the herbal tea, thrice daily.

How to Grow False Unicorn

You can wildcraft false unicorn if you've suitable garden space, preferably moist, shady and forest-like climatic conditions.

False unicorn side effects: May cause nausea or vomiting in large doses. Consult a qualified herbalist or naturopath if you are pregnant.

GINSENG ROOTS:

If you're health conscious, you should know the health benefits of ginseng roots. Ginseng roots are often used in alternative and complimentary medicine for treatment of libido, alcoholism, stress, memory problems, sexual desire loss and to improve longevity. Ginseng root helps you to adapt (cope) with challenging situations including stress. Ginseng root contains volatile oils, starch, fats, saponins, vitamin B1, B2 and B12, choline, minerals and fats.

Ginseng plant can be identified by cylindrical, long root with prominent wrinkles creating the 'man root' shape.

In Chinese medicine, ginseng is widely used to treat general weakness and debility due to liver diseases, memory problems and stress. Ginseng improves mood and memory in children with behavioral disorders. You can combat viral and bacterial infections using ginseng. The herb increases libido (sexual desire) by boosting male sexual hormone (testosterone).

You can see various grades of ginseng in which wild ginseng are often preferred for medicinal purposes.

Preparation methods:

You should take ginseng at least for a month, with two weeks rest, in-between. Ginseng powder can be consumed as teas, soups and extracts.

Panax-Ginseng Tea:

Ginseng roots can be used as tea which is mild and slightly sweet with distinctive taste. Harvest ginseng root, dry it and get it powdered. Add 1 teaspoon of ginseng powder with a cup of water. Boil in low flame and cover the container for 15-20 minutes. Allow it to stand and cool. Add ginger, lemon or honey to add pleasant taste.

Rosemary-Ginseng Tea:

To treat cold and cough, you can use ginseng with rosemary to improve blood circulation into the lungs and to boost immune system. To prepare decoction, take 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary leaf, ¼ teaspoon ginseng root powder and 1 tablespoon grated ginger root. Boil the mixture in 2 cups of water and simmer it for 20 minutes. You can consume up to 3 cups in daytime. It may cause sleeplessness, avoid drinking it in night.

Morning circulation tonic:

Start your morning with the ginseng morning circulation tonic. The herbal plant chemicals increase blood flow, memory, mental concentration and reduce mental fogginess.

Take one teaspoon of chopped ginger root and add with one teaspoon of dried panax ginseng. Add equal parts of lemon balm with rosemary to prepare the herbal blend. Infuse one teaspoonful of herbal blend with one cup of boiling water for 10 minutes.

Memory and focus tea:

To increase mind concentration, you can choose panax ginseng memory and focus tea.

Take 2 parts of dried gotu kola leaves, ¼ part dried panax ginseng powder and 1 part of fresh or dried rosemary to prepare herbal blend. Use one teaspoon of herbal mixture to mix with one cup of hot water. Infuse the mixture for 20 minutes in a covered vessel.

How to Grow Ginseng

To raise mature ginseng plant, you need to wait for at least four years. The plant may grow up to 10-20 inches high. Ginseng plant is not recommended for impatient gardener.

Ginseng Side Effects:

Do not use during pregnancy. Consult with a health professional before self treating if you have high blood pressure.

Herbs of tropical countries:

AMALAKI:

Amalaki (Indian Gooseberry) is well-known for its medical benefits and anti-aging properties. Amalaki is a good source of vitamin C, amino acids and minerals. The edible fruit contains high antioxidants than any other fruits. You can delay your aging and associated problems by taking Amalaki daily.

Amalaki tree can be identified by small-leaves, medium-sized tree with grey bark and reddish wood. The tree is widely distributed on the plains and submountain regions, all over the India and neighboring countries.

Instead of taking artificial nutritional supplements, you can consider taking highly nutritious Amalaki. The edible fruit contains several minerals, vitamin C, tannins, ellagic acid, gallic acid and tannins. These bioactive constituents improve skin tone, immunity, gastric acidity and prevent premature aging.

If your kids are suffering from recurrent flu or colds, give them Amalaki to improve immune resistance against infections of respiratory tract. Amalaki promotes optimal liver health and prevent liver damage.

Needless to prepare, you can eat fresh Amalaki fruit once daily to treat your problems.

ARJUNA:

Arjuna is widely used in ayurvedic medicine over centuries to treat heart problems, blood pressure disorders, kidney stones and asthma. The deciduous tree is native to Indian subcontinent but sparely present in Myanmar and Sri Lanka. You can prepare Arjuna-milk heart tonic by your own to promote heart health.

Bark of Arjuna tree is widely used for medicinal purposes. The bark contains glycosides, flavones, arjunolic acid, b-sitosterol, casuarinin and oligomeric proanthocyanidins. These plant chemicals help you to heal wounds and to treat herpes virus infections too!

If you're suffering from high blood pressure with heart blood flow problems, consider Arjuna tonic to lower blood pressure and to prevent heart attacks in future. Arjuna contains several antioxidants that fight stress.

How to prepare?

Arjuna bark – coarse powder – 10 gm

Boiled milk – 80 ml

Water – 320 ml

Mix Arjuna bark's coarse powder with boiled milk and add 320 ml of water. Boil the mixture in mild heat and stir continuously. Boil the mixture for 20 minutes or over until the mixture gets reduced to 80 ml. Filter the mixture and use the Arjuna heart tonic to treat your ailments.

You can take 10-20 ml, twice daily, before food.

ASHVAGANDHA:

You can identify Ashvangandha by your own using its unique features! The shrub looks erect with wooly hairs present all over the plant. Ashvangandha is native to India and certain parts of North America.

Over 3000 years, Ashvangadha (Withania Somnifera/Winter Cherry) has been traditionally used in Indian system of medicine to treat fever, boost immune functions and memory. To promote general wellbeing or to revive your mind and body or to calm nerves, you can take ashvangandha. If you're planning to have a baby, Ashvangandha can help you to have one by improving your egg quality!

Scholastic studies have demonstrated the brain and mind benefits of Ashvangandha. Taking Ashvangandha can increase cognitive ability and memory by augmenting brain chemical (neurotransmitters) activities. Indian researchers have proved the antioxidant properties of Ashvagandha that fights stress, onset of aging, cognitive disorders and degenerative disorders. You can also treat your joint pain and sexual health problems safely with Ashvagandha.

Ashvagandha contains several active plant compounds including Withaferin A and carbon-27-glycowithanolide. These compounds are responsible for mental health and anti-stress action. Some of the alkaloids present in Ashvagandha are pseudotropine, tropine, isopelletrine, saponin and anaferine with antioxidants such as glutathione, superoxide dismutase and catalase to fight stress and premature aging.

Preparation:

You cannot prepare Ashvagandha powder (coarse) by your own, as it involves specialized procedures. You can procure Ashvangandha powder from any ayurvedic outlets.

To treat your ailments you can prepare Ashwagandha remedy recipe in your home.

- Take 25g Ashvagandha root powder (coarse) and mix it to 400 ml of water, boil and reduce the mixture to 100 ml.
- Add 100 ml of boiled milk to the decoction and reduce it to 100 ml. Filter it before use.
- Take 30 ml in the morning before food along with a spoonful of

clarified butter.

- If you’re trying to have a baby, take this mixture for at least 2-3 months.
- Do not store the prepared mixture more than 3-4 hours.

Side effects:

Do not take Ashvagandha if you’re suffering from stomach ulcer. In some individuals, Ashvagandha may cause or worsen constipation. To reduce side effects, always use milk or ghee (clarified butter) as a vehicle to consume Ashvagandha. In high doses, Ashvagandha may cause sleepiness. If you’re pregnant or a nursing mother, you should take Ashvagandha under proper medical supervision.

BAEL:

Bael trees thrive well in hilly, sub-mountain regions of India, mainly in Himalayan region. Bael is a sacred herb in certain South Asian countries including Malaysia, India and Indonesia. In folk medicine, Bael fruit is used as a medicinal food to treat intestinal problems including digestive problems, intestinal gas problems, diarrhea and dysentery. If you're suffering from sore belly (peptic ulcer), take Bael fruit to soothe pain and intestinal sores. Bael fruit effectively kills disease-causing virus, bacteria, intestinal worms and reduce pain symptoms due to indigestion or bloating in kids.

The wild fruit of Bael is rich in flavonoids, coumarins and other essential oils that possess medical properties. These extracts/chemicals calm down your allergy symptoms naturally without any side effects. Bael fruit contains tannin and pectin that heals stomach ulcer. Apart from diarrhea, Bael is an excellent treatment for constipation and inflammatory (painful) disorders of stomach such as colitis.

You can eat the fresh Bael fruit, preferably before food in mornings to alleviate your problems.

GINGER:

Ginger is a native medicinal herb of Southeast Asia and being cultivated in most of warm climatic countries of Asia and Africa. The root portion (rhizome) of the herb possesses excellent medicinal properties.

Historically, ginger (Zingiber officinale/Sunthi) has been used in traditional Indian medicine as a digestive aid to treat nausea and stomach upset problems. Even modern medicine studies have demonstrated the medicinal properties of ginger to treatment abdominal fullness and discomfort in kids.
Studies conducted in most of the Western countries have proved that ginger modulates body's response to nausea. If you've symptoms of nausea due to any cause, you can consider ginger as 'universal remedy'.

Ginger oil contains several beneficial plant chemicals such as gingerol, shogaols, zingiberene, sesquiterpenes and paradol. The pungent nature of ginger is due to 6-gingerol and 6-shagaol. These compounds are present in fresh and dried roots of ginger that suppress vomiting and abdominal acidity. The plant chemicals possess blood pressure lowering properties with pain-alleviating, cough-treating and fever-reducing properties.

You can treat a wide range of medical problems including diarrhea, joint pain, nausea and vomiting. Ginger reduces pain symptoms in arthritis (joint pain) by modulating causatives of pain (inflammation). Ginger aids digestion and prevent abdominal bloating sensation (gaseous fullness). Ginger suppresses growth of disease-causing bacteria and control infections such as diarrhea.

How to prepare?

You can prepare fresh ginger juice to aid digestion, relieve nausea and vomiting. To prepare fresh ginger juice, peel off the skin, chop into pieces and crush the ginger root with a cup of water. Decant the juice and drink it.

Ginger retains its medicinal properties even after gets dried. You can also use dried ginger root to relieve your symptoms.

Ginger oil preparation requires specialized laboratory equipments and you cannot prepare by your own. You can avail ginger oil from retail sellers including supermarkets.

Side effects:

To treat nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, do not consume more than 2 servings of ginger juice, every day. In some individuals, ginger juice might cause painful belly sores (gastric ulcers). If you’re expecting a baby or if you’re pregnant avoid taking ginger juice.

BRAHMI:

Brahmi is a nerve tonic being used over centuries in ayurvedic medicine in India. The small creeping herb thrives well in marshy places near ponds and stream. Brahmi can be characteristically identified by presence of numerous branches with clubbed leaves.

Brahmi is infamously known as ‘brain herb’ that supports normal brain functions, consciousness and spirit. You can improve your cognitive effects, concentration, memory and learning skills by taking this ‘brain herb’. If your kid is not doing well in academics, you can consider giving them Brahmi. The nervine tonic improves mental ability by calming the restlessness nature of your kid.

Published research evidences proved positive brain functions and memory retention in Brahmi-treated individuals. An Indo-Australian study concluded that Brahmi improved memory in age-related memory disorder patients. Brahmi temporarily increase certain brain chemicals that are associated with learning process and visual information processing. Brahmi relieves agitation and other behavioral disorders. Brahmi is an excellent antioxidant herb that reduces mental weakness (fatigue).

The herb contains several bioactive compounds such as herpestine, brahmine, saponins, hersaponin, nicotine and monnierin. The compounds possess sleep-inducing properties with heart tonic benefits.

How to prepare?

You need not to know any specialized procedures to prepare brahmi powder. Take handful of fresh Brahmi leaves and allow it to dry in shady places until it gets hard dry. Powder the leaves and take one teaspoon of Brahmi powder with water or honey, every morning to stay mentally active!

GUDICHI:

Gudichi is a climber plant with numerous aerial roots. Gudichi is commonly seen in the Himalayas and parts of South India. You can use the stem, leaves and aerial roots for medicinal purposes. In ancient India, ayurvedic physicians used aerial roots to stitch surgical wound due to wound healing and strong texture properties.

Gudichi (Indian Tinospora/Tinospora cordiofolia) is a potent herbal adaptogen that supports normal immune functions against infections and stress. In ayurvedic medicine, gudichi is considered as a mental revitalizer and general health tonic. Gudichi improves your immune system functioning against infections such as skin, tissue, respiratory infections and treats stomach problems. Gudichi is recommended as a supportive therapy for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. The herb is liver-protective in nature and treats viral jaundice and alcohol-associated liver problems. If you're suffering from kidney stones or urinary tract infections, you can increase urination by taking Guduchi.

Gudichi stem contains several plant chemicals including palmarin, berberine, tinosporic acid, tinosporol, columbin, chasmanthin and tinosporon. These chemicals are moderate pain killers and suppress fever. Hence, gudichi is a good treatment for joint disorders such as gout and arthritis.

How to prepare it?

Take 10g of Gudichi (Indian Tinospora) stem and 210 ml of water. Preferably, choose stem rich in starch materials, remove husk and chop it into smaller pieces. Crush the pieces and soak in water for about 6-8 water. Macerate the mixture rigorously to aid release of starch material into the extract. Discard the woody stem parts and allow the liquid to stand overnight. The solid particles in the mixture can settle down in the bottom.

After a day, discard the water without disturbing starchy sediment. Collect, wash and dry the sediment in a shady place.

You should store the powder in a moist-proof, air-tight glass container with polythene cover. Take stem powder 3-6 g/day in divided doses. Alternatively you can consume Gudichi powder decoction (15-60 ml/day) in divided doses to treat fever.

Side effects and precautions:

Gudichi is a good treatment for diabetes. But you should not take Gudichi along with other medications to lower blood sugar levels. If you're a pregnant woman

or a nursing mother, avoid taking Gudichi.

NEEM:

Right from your childhood, you're being acquainted with Neem plant or Neem-derived herbal supplements to treat infections. Neem is a native herb of Burma, present abundantly in natural and dry forests of India. In Ayurveda, neem has been traditionally used to maintain general wellbeing and to alleviate several diseases and disorders. Neem seed oil, leaves, fruits, seed kernels, root, bark and gum are used to prepare medicines. Research studies conducted by scholars reported anti-infective, anti-diabetic, skin supportive, internal cleansing properties of neem. To lower blood glucose levels, neem is an excellent medicine. Additionally, neem effectively heals diabetic foot ulcers and associated skin problems.

Neem contains limonoids, quercetin and nimbosterol which are antifungal and antibacterial in nature. Neem flowers contain essential fatty acids and tannins that improve general health. Other bioactive constituents of neem are salannol, azadirachtin, fraxinellone, azadiradione, salannin, nimibin, vilasinin and vepinina.

You may not like neem due to its bitterness. But you should understand that the benefits of neem outweigh bitter taste and other side effects.

Neem possess powerful antioxidant, anti-stress and anti-bacterial properties in skin disorders. Neem effectively kills several pimple-causing bacteria and suppresses skin inflammation in pimples (acne). If you're suffering from hyperacidity or ulcer, you should consider taking neem. The bitter herb suppresses acid production in the stomach and prevents ulcers.

Preparation:

You can prepare neem powder or bathing water by your own! Take handful of fresh neem leaves, dry it over days and get it powdered. You can use the powder to apply onto recurrent skin infections. Alternatively, use can mix in hot water for bathing. To treat pus-filled wounds, add neem powder with water or honey and apply directly over the wounds. Boiled neem water using bark or leaves can

be used to wash infections such as eye infections and pile mass.

Neem side effects:

But do not over do with neem! As like other herbs, neem has it own side effects. Neem can lower blood sugar levels. So, diabetic individuals should not take neem without medical supervision. Neem is a natural contraceptive too! If you’re trying to have a baby, do not take neem or neem supplements. Using neem oil to treat dandruff might cause burning sensation in your eyes. Take care of your eyes while washing off the oil.

SHATAVARI/ASPARAGUS:

Although native to Himalayas, Asparagus is not a hard-to-find herb. You can even grow it in pots in your home. The woody climber bears small, white-colored flowers. In Indian subcontinent, Shatavari is being used over centuries by nursing mothers.

As a tonic, Shatavari is a well known treatment for a variety of problems, particularly in women. Shatavari treats sexual disorders, infertility, menstrual period problems in women. If you want to increase breast milk secretion, asparagus should be your first and safe choice. As a female rejuvenator, Shatavari improves symptoms of vaginal discharge problems and maintains normal acidic environment in vagina.

Shatavari is not only for women, but also for men with fertility problems such as sexual debility, ejaculation problems and impotence. Generally, Shatavari improves symptoms of diarrhea, stomach ulcer, sore throat, prolonged fever and acidity problems. Shatavari is highly useful for women who are in menopause or undergone surgical removal of uterus. Shatavari supplies optimal levels of female hormones in such individuals and maintains overall wellbeing.

Shatavari contains several beneficial plant chemicals such as glucosides, sitosterol, steroidal saponins, stigamasterol, isoflavones, polysaccharide, asparagamine A and tannins. Shatavari contains triterpene saponins known as Shatavarin I-IV which promote natural production of estrogen in women’s body.

Side effects and contraindication of Asparagus:

Asparagus/Shatavari may cause allergic reactions including skin and respiratory reactions in some individuals. If you're obese or overweight, avoid taking Shatavari. Asparagus might cause weight gain. Kidney and heart patients with fluid/water retention problems should avoid taking Asparagus. Women with hormone (estrogen) problems, non-cancerous tumors in breast and/or uterus should not take Shatavari.

Preparation:

To prepare decoction, you should harvest and dry the roots in shady places over a month. When it comes to convenience, it is good for your purchase Shatavari as supplement capsules or as easy-to-digest granules. Mix one tablespoon of Shatavari granules in milk and drink twice a day to achieve desired results. Some Indians drink fresh root juice mixed with honey.

VASAKA:

Traditionally, Vasaka or Malabar nut tree is being used in Ayurvedic medicine to treat lung infections and other respiratory problems. Almost, all parts of Vasaka including roots, fruits, leaves and flowers are used to treat cough, asthma, cold and chest infections. Vasaka is a native plant of Asia, present widely in Indian subcontinent, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Indonesia and southern parts of China.

If you're an asthmatic or allergic to allergens, want to avoid side effects of harmful steroid medications, Vasaka is a best herb to manage your problems safely. Vasaka contains several bioactive ingredients such as vasinone, vasicine, vasicol which possess excellent anti-cough properties. These compounds dilate lung muscles and treats breathing difficulties in asthma patients. Vasaka loosen mucus and relieve chest congestion and cough. In Siddha medicine, Vasaka is being prescribed as a supportive medication for tuberculosis patients.

Vasaka contains several bioactive compounds (alkaloids) such as Vasicine that is responsible for medicinal properties. Similar to coffee and tea, Vasicine contains theophylline which is a stimulant and prevents allergic reactions. Research studies proved that Vasicine increase urination, alleviate menstrual problems in women and certain heart disorders. The whole plant is a blood purifier, and helps us to treat jaundice, blood clotting problems, joint pain, fever, vomiting and skin problems.

If you're in Asia, you can find the shrub by observing the characteristic, lance-shaped, smooth-edged white or whitish purple colored flower. The dark-colored leaves and flowers are bitter in taste.

Preparation:

To prepare Vasaka leaf juice, crush the fresh leaves or flowers and prepare leaves juice up to 10-20 ml. To prepare root decoction, boil chopped roots in 100-150 ml of water and reduce it to 40-80 ml before use.

Side effects:

Adult and juvenile diabetic individuals should use Vasaka with caution. Vasaka might reduce blood sugar levels below normal range. Start with a low dose and adjust accordingly. Pregnant women should avoid taking Vasaka. It is generally

safe in breast-feeding mothers and children over one year of age.

HOLY BASIL/TULSI:

If you want to lead a healthy life, plant a Holy Basil plant in your backyard. Holy Basil, popularly known as Tulsi, is a sacred herb for Hindus. Holy Basil supports normal breathing, overall wellbeing, longevity while controls stress and infections.

Research evidences demonstrated powerful antioxidant properties of Tulsi by normalizing body's own stress (oxidative stress). These stress mechanisms contribute to various illness including heart diseases, diabetes and cancer. Holy Basil supports maintenance of normal blood sugar by optimizing stress hormones called cortisol. In experimental studies, Tulsi was proved to be a liver-protective herb. Tulsi is a good adaptogen that help us to cope, adapt with abnormal environments such as dust, noise and chemical pollution.

If you've mild to moderate breathing infection, you need not to go for a pharmacy. Tulsi is a known antibiotic, antiviral with cough-treating properties. Fresh Tulsi contains several volatile compounds, aromatic oils and Ursolic acid that prevent allergic reactions such as common cold, prolonged breathing problems, asthma, recurrent lung infections and seasonal allergies. Tulsi contains cineole, camphene and eugenol that effectively relieve nasal congestion and cough.

Preparation:

Needless to prepare a extract, just chewing the fresh Tulsi leaves could treat your problem(s) effectively. If you don't have fresh leaves, take handful of dried Tulsi leaves and boil in 100 ml of water. Wait until the extract gets reduced to 50ml; filter and drink it to treat your breathing problems.

GARLIC:

Garlic is a commonly available herb that you can avail easily from supermarkets and local retail outlets. Dried garlic is available round the year. To get fresh garlic, July to early October is the best season. Alternatively, you can grow garlic in your backyard too!

Garlic help us to alleviate several medical problems such as sinusitis, heart problems, cholesterol problems, allergies, elevated blood pressure, asthma, ringworm infection, flu, digestive disorders, sore throat and painful swelling. For culinary use, garlic is a main herb being used all over the world. But remember, don't consume raw garlic! It might harm your belly.

If you're suffering from bacterial, fungal, parasitic infections, the one-stop solution should be garlic. To treat severe and persistent infections, you may not need an antibiotic or antifungal medication. Garlic contains powerful antibiotic substance known as Allicin in addition with antioxidants and other constituents such as citral, S-methyl-1-cysteine sulfoxide, linalool and geraniol.

Garlic is a medicinal food with a variety of health benefits. Garlic has been acknowledged by the modern scientific community as a powerful tool for blood clotting problems that leads to heart attacks. Garlic reduces total cholesterol and triglycerides in the blood by increasing high density lipoproteins (HDL), also called as 'good cholesterol'. In diabetics, garlic significantly reduces blood sugar levels by stimulating insulin production from the pancreas. Allicin present in garlic is a notable broad-spectrum antibiotic that might be able to treat several microbial infections.

As like allopathic medications, garlic may also cause some side effects at higher doses. Some of the mild side effects of garlic are stomach upset, bad breath and interaction with some medications including blood thinners.

Preparation methods:

For our wellbeing, we can use garlic liberally in food preparation. For general health, two or more cloves of garlic are generally considered as safe and

effective medicine. If you’re a diabetic or heart patient or suffering from joint pain, eat 2-3 fresh garlic cloves, every day to keep your symptoms at bay. To treat burn injuries, garlic can be applied directly onto the burns. Add a spoonful of honey to make garlic more palatable. Crushed garlic is a pesticide and repels mosquitoes effectively and safely.

Use your fingers to separate the whole bulb into cloves. Make sure to remove green garlic shoots, as it tastes bitter. To use crushed garlic, peel off the skin and press it down hard. If you would like to crush further, add some table salt and crush it again. Store whole garlic in open, cool, dry container to avoid mold (fungus) growth.

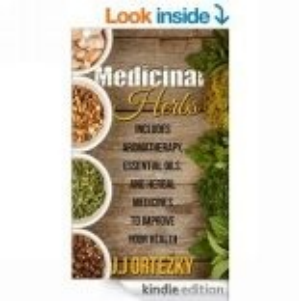
Conclusion:

Herbs and spices can transform your bland and dull food into mouth-watering, delicious dishes with health benefits. You can use herbs to spice-up veggies, lean meats and pasta to enjoy the appealing taste of nutritious food. Recent research studies proved that adding herbs and/or spices in food helps reducing table salt intake (sodium chloride/common salt) without altering food taste.

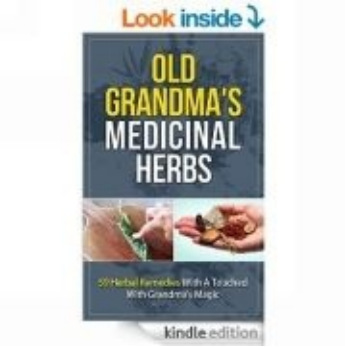
With packs of health perks, you can add flavor and aroma of your favorite dishes by using herbs and spices that are available in your region. If you cannot avail as fresh herbs, you can purchase organic herbs from commercial sources. These nutritional herbs combat deadly diseases like heart diseases, diabetes and even cancer!

Highly Recommended Holistic Health Books

Medicinal Herbs: Includes Aromatherapy, Essential Oils, And Herbal Medicines To Improve Your Health



Old Grandma's Medicinal Herbs: 59 Herbal Remedies With A Touch of Grandma's Magic



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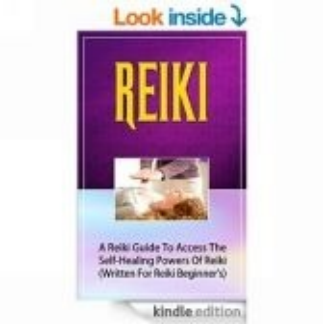

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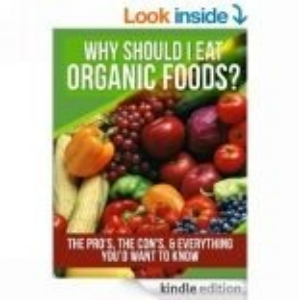

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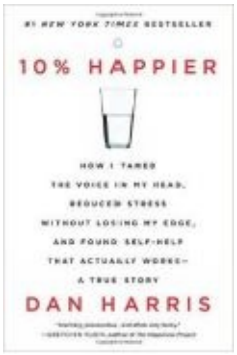
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